



Father Richard Frechette, CP, D.O. Medical Director, Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos International

When Rick Frechette became a Passionist priest in 1979, his goal was to minister to the spiritual health of humanity. Little did he know that one day he would also minister to the physical health of orphaned children and the needy in a third world country.

Born in 1953, Frechette graduated from Assumption College in Massachusetts with degrees in math and philosophy. He next attended St. John's University in New York and studied theology as a seminarian, being ordained a priest in 1979. After a few years as a parish priest in Baltimore, he met Fr. William B. Wasson, founder of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH), Spanish for *Our Little Brothers and Sisters*, and worked in Mexico in 1983 at an old hacienda that had been converted to a home for nearly 1,000 orphaned and abandoned children. As a priest and administrator, his next calling was to Honduras to help establish a second orphanage for NPH.

Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity in Haiti directed Frechette to the next turning point in his life. The sisters were caring for babies born of dying mothers, frequently sick with AIDS. Many of the babies did not survive, but those who did needed care, love and a place to live. Wasson and Frechette visited the poor country and children's hospice and decided to begin an orphanage there. Today, *Nos Petits Freres et Soeurs*, French for "Our Little Brothers and Sisters," survives amidst political chaos, economic disaster and uncontrollable crime. Despite the obstacles, Frechette is determined to make a difference in the lives of children. During particularly violent years of embargo, when it was suggested that the NPH staff leave Haiti, Frechette said, "How could we leave the children? What kind of shepherd would leave when the wolf comes?"

Making a difference meant going back to medical school to learn how to minister to the children's physical needs, which resulted in his medical degree in 1998 from the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine, and becoming a general practitioner licensed in New York and Florida. "The poor people have scant access to medical care; even if they are lucky enough to get evaluated at a clinic, both scarcity of medicines and their relatively high prices prevent their getting treatment. Our own working conditions, especially in the poorest areas of Port-au-Prince, are tragic and are deplorable. We have little water, no electricity, few medicines and supplies," states the doctor-priest.

Frechette's duties include overseeing NPH's 250-bed hospital, St. Damien's, which provides long-term care to critically ill children and outpatient services to over 17,000 children and adults each year; assuring the healthcare at the NPH orphanage called St. Hélène, with over 450 children; and spending five mornings a week working alongside the Sisters of Mother Teresa in their centers for the sick and destitute dying.

Frechette now serves as Medical Director of NPH International and oversees the medical needs of the children in nine countries.

Friends of the Orphans is dedicated to improving the lives of orphaned, abandoned and disadvantaged children through the support of the Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH) network of homes in Latin America and the Caribbean.

134 North LaSalle Street
Suite 500
Chicago, IL 60602-1036
Phone 312 386 7499
Toll-free 888 201 8880
Fax 312 658 0040
friendsoftheorphans.org

Help preserve the future for the children of NPH by including a legacy gift in your estate plan.
Please contact us for more information.